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Security Council

Fifty-third Year

Provisional

3939th Meeting

Thursday, 5 November 1998, 4.05 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Burleigh	(United States of America)
Members:	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Amorim
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Costa Rica	Mr. Niehaus
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Dangue Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Japan	Mr. Satoh
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Letter dated 31 October 1998 from the Deputy Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/1023)

Letter dated 2 November 1998 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/1032)

Letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/1033)

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The meeting was called to order at 4.05 p.m.

Expression of welcome to the new Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations

The President: I should like, at the outset of the meeting, to extend on behalf of the Council a warm welcome to the new Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Mr. Yukio Satoh. We look forward to cooperating with him in the Council's work.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of November, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Sir Jeremy Greenstock, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of October 1998. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Greenstock for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Letter dated 31 October 1998 from the Deputy Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/1023)

Letter dated 2 November 1998 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/1032)

Letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/1033)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the letter dated 31 October 1998 from the Deputy Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/1023); the letter dated 2 November 1998 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/1032); and the letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/1033).

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1998/1038, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. Brazil, Costa Rica, Portugal, Slovenia and Sweden have joined as sponsors of the draft resolution.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/1998/1038) before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): First of all, thank you very much, Sir, for your very kind words regarding my first Security Council meeting. I assure you of my full cooperation.

I would also like to endorse what the President said with regard to the excellent job that our colleague Ambassador Greenstock did. I would also like to say that I know that with his renowned expertise, the current President, Ambassador Burleigh, will do a good job of leading the Council.

On 31 October, the Revolutionary Command Council and the Baath Party of Iraq decided to suspend cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and to maintain the restrictions on the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Japan strongly regrets this decision. To our great surprise, the decision came the day after the Security

Council completed its work on the presidential letter to the Secretary-General describing the Council's initial views on a comprehensive review of Iraq's compliance with the relevant Council resolutions, which was proposed by the Secretary-General on 6 August.

The decision on 31 October, together with Iraq's decision on 5 August, has, in effect, rendered impossible the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, including the provisions of resolution 687 (1991), which stipulate the conditions that must be met in order for the sanctions to be lifted. This is a regrettable situation for both Iraq and the international community as a whole.

Deeply concerned by the Iraqi decision, Japan, for its part, made a démarche to the embassy of Iraq in Tokyo on 2 November, urging Iraq to immediately resume full and unconditional cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA.

In view of the gravity of the situation, the Council responded immediately by issuing a presidential press statement on 31 October, sending a firm, unequivocal and unanimous message to Iraq. The draft resolution before us is the formal response of the Security Council to the Iraqi decision of 31 October. The message is quite clear: sanctions can be lifted only when Iraq complies with the relevant provisions of the Security Council resolutions and the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq and the Secretary-General, and this can be achieved only through full cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA.

My delegation considers this draft resolution to be appropriate and, therefore, has joined the United Kingdom in co-sponsoring it.

The President: I thank the representative of Japan for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): Along with the other Council members, France has lent its support to the draft resolution that is going to be put to the vote, and given the final draft, we wish to join the other sponsors. In expressing itself in a unanimous way the Council demonstrates its unity in the face of an unacceptable and irrational Iraqi decision. The Council is acting firmly because Iraq's decision represents a serious violation of that country's obligations. By so acting, Baghdad is turning its back on the Council's clearly expressed intention to proceed without delay to a comprehensive review of the implementation of its resolutions as soon as the restrictions imposed on the United Nations Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency on 5 August were lifted.

The draft resolution that we are going to adopt today restates the Council's intention to carry out this comprehensive review. It also reaffirms the intention of the Council

> "to act in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 687 (1991) on the duration of the prohibitions referred to in that resolution".

These provisions, as everyone knows, are embodied in paragraphs 21 and 22 of Council resolution 687 (1991).

Finally, in its last operative paragraph, the text we will adopt reaffirms unambiguously the responsibilities and the prerogatives of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, responsibilities that include evaluating situations as and when necessary and making the appropriate conclusions.

France appeals to Iraq to seize the opportunity that the Council is ready to offer it through the undertaking, initially proposed by the Secretary-General, of a comprehensive review. The only way for this to be done and for there to be progress towards lifting the sanctions that are causing suffering to the Iraqi people is for Baghdad to rescind without delay the unjustifiable measures of 5 August and 31 October.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): Today, two months will have passed since the Iraqi authorities decided, on 5 August, to suspend cooperation with regard to the inspection activities of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Security Council at that time unequivocally rejected that decision as being totally unacceptable and in contravention of Iraqi obligations. While demanding in vain that Iraq rescind its decision, the Council showed remarkable patience. Moreover, in its resolution 1194 (1998) of 9 September 1998, the Council clearly indicated its willingness to address the concerns of Iraqi authorities by expressing its readiness to conduct a comprehensive review of Iraq's compliance with its obligations and by welcoming the Secretary-General's proposal in this regard.

In the face of the persistent absence of full Iraqi cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA, the Security Council and the Secretary-General continued to work towards the realization of a comprehensive review, to be conducted once Iraq resumes full cooperation. These efforts culminated last Friday when the Council, after intensive consultations, reached a consensus on an outline of the comprehensive review.

This was an achievement of great importance. It was also a clear signal to Iraq that the Council is serious about a comprehensive review. Faced with this clear and promising prospect, Iraq, however, decided to cease cooperation with UNSCOM.

This reaction from Iraq is really astonishing. While the Council was patiently moving towards meeting Iraqi concerns, Iraq chose to move in the opposite direction. It is difficult to understand the motives for this reaction. It is also difficult to see how this grave challenge to the Council's authority can result in anything other than a serious aggravation of the situation.

This will not serve any of Iraq's interests. Indeed, the only way for Iraq to progress towards the lifting of the sanctions remains the fulfilment of its obligations under all relevant resolutions, notably resolution 687 (1991). If paragraph 22 of that resolution is to be implemented, the effective operation of the Special Commission and the IAEA is essential. This is clearly stated in the draft resolution before us today.

We believe that this draft resolution is a timely and necessary one. Slovenia co-sponsored it and will vote in favour of it. It is well-balanced and focused. It signals to Iraq in no uncertain terms that it still has a choice: either to resume full cooperation, whereupon the Council will proceed to the comprehensive review, or to forfeit another opportunity and further delay the moment the Council can act in its favour.

We strongly hope that Iraq will make the right choice and that it will do so soon.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): We learned with deep concern of the decision of the Iraqi leadership on 31 October to halt cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission. That decision is unacceptable. It has jeopardized the search of recent months for a solution to the Iraqi problem. That step runs counter to the agreements between the Secretary-General and the Iraqi side that Baghdad would rescind its decision of 5 August and that the Security Council would conduct a comprehensive review of the Iraqi situation. Those agreements opened the way to the lifting of sanctions on Iraq.

Following upon Iraq's decision of 31 October, Russia immediately informed the Iraqi leadership of its position. We are engaging in active diplomatic efforts to promote a settlement of the problem, in the belief that only the resumption of the constructive cooperation of Iraq with the United Nations will make possible a comprehensive review and the prospect of lifting the oil embargo.

The way to overcome this new crisis lies, we believe, exclusively in political and diplomatic efforts alongside the active role of the Secretary-General. Any attempt to resolve the problem by force would have highly unpredictable and dangerous consequences, both for the United Nations ability to continue to monitor proscribed military activity in Iraq and for peace and stability in the region and in the Middle East as a whole.

We are pleased to note that the draft resolution before us seeks precisely a political solution to the Iraqi problem and contains no language that could be arbitrarily interpreted as some kind of permission to use force. The draft resolution makes it clear that the Security Council, in accordance with its primary responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security, will remain actively seized of the situation.

Without in any way attempting to justify Iraq's actions, I wish to stress the exceptional importance of total clarity with regard to the Security Council's intentions to implement its own resolutions. The draft resolution clearly reaffirms the Council's intention to take a decision on the current sanctions in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 687 (1991). This naturally refers to action under paragraph 22 of that resolution regarding the lifting of the oil embargo once Iraq meets its disarmament obligations. The same understanding was stated in the letter sent on 30 October by the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General in support of his idea of a comprehensive review. That concept is reaffirmed in the draft resolution. We hope that, in the light of all this, Baghdad will again assess the emerging situation and rescind its decision of 31 October.

With this in mind, as well as the fact that the sponsors incorporated a number of amendments reflecting our principled approach to the situation, the Russian delegations joins the consensus and will support the draft resolution.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): After the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding by the Secretary-General and the Government of Iraq last February and up to the beginning of August, we witnessed a period of progress in the disarmament activities in Iraq. This progress was due to the cooperation lent by the Iraqi authorities to the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which was acknowledged by the Council.

The Iraqi decision of 5 August put an end to what had finally become a positive trend — a trend leading, we thought, to the swift completion of the road map known to Iraq as necessary to achieve the lifting of sanctions.

In a serious effort to re-establish such a trend, the Council, with the assistance of the Secretary-General, offered to engage, soon after Iraq were to rescind its unacceptable decision of 5 August, in a comprehensive review of Iraq's compliance with its obligations under the relevant resolutions, in order to identify any tasks which still needed to be undertaken to satisfy the remaining requirements of those resolutions.

In view of those efforts, it was with dismay and incomprehension that all Council members received the decision of Iraq, last Saturday, to cease any cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission and to continue to impose restrictions on the work of the IAEA, the effective operation of which is essential for the implementation of resolution 687 (1991).

The draft resolution we have before us contains the message the Council must now convey to Iraq. It expresses a firm condemnation of the Iraqi decision of 31 October; it renews the support of the Council for the Special Commission and the IAEA; and it demands that Iraq immediately rescind that decision, as well as the 5 August decision.

Iraq must understand that it cannot continue to miss the opportunities offered. Iraq cannot continue to delay fulfilling the conditions that will enable the Council to act in accordance with paragraphs 21 and 22 of resolution 687 (1991). Iraq cannot continue to delay the moment when the Council will be in a position to act on the duration of the prohibitions referred to in that resolution.

The draft resolution before us represents a firm, unambiguous and determined reaction by the Council. It also expresses, in no uncertain terms, the united response of all Council members to the Iraqi stand.

It is up to Iraq now. Iraq must immediately reconsider its position, re-engage once and for all on the path of cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA, and ensure full compliance with its obligations. Only in this way will Iraq enable the Council to lift the sanctions.

Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden): On 31 October, Iraq announced its complete cessation of the little remaining cooperation it had offered to the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM). It also decided to continue to restrict the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Iraqi decision was surprising, and somewhat incomprehensible, in the light of the important fact that the Security Council, the day before, had formulated a unified view on the concept of a comprehensive review of Iraqi compliance. Such a comprehensive review would, *inter alia*, have marked the road out of sanctions for Iraq. But it cannot take place until Iraq is back in full cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA, and steps like those now being taken by Iraq will not bring it any closer to the lifting of sanctions. We are always ready to listen to the views of the Government of Iraq, but attempts to bargain with the Security Council over its resolutions cannot be accepted.

In the draft resolution before us, the Security Council condemns Iraq's behaviour and confirms its demands on Iraq. That message cannot be misunderstood: Iraq must immediately rescind its unacceptable decisions of 5 August and 31 October and return to full compliance and cooperation. There is no room for compromise on these fundamental principles.

At the same time, this draft resolution not only repeats the Council's demands; it also reaffirms that Iraq's compliance with all its obligations will make it possible for the Security Council to lift the sanctions, as stipulated in resolution 687 (1991). It restates the Council's readiness to carry out a comprehensive review of Iraq's compliance with its obligations once Iraq has rescinded its decisions and resumed full cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA. It is our sincere hope that the message embedded in these paragraphs — an exit sign, as it were, for the route out of sanctions — shall not be missed by Baghdad.

Finally, a very important principle is reflected in the last paragraph of the draft resolution. The Security Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, must not be circumvented. We see this paragraph as an expression of the desire of members to safeguard that responsibility.

Sweden fully supports the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil): The draft resolution we are about to vote on clearly condemns the decision of the Government of Iraq to stop its cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM). It also refers to the continued restrictions imposed by Iraq on the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Since 5 August, when these restrictions first came about, Brazil has joined other members of the Security Council in stressing that the lack of full cooperation with both agencies was totally unacceptable and constituted a violation of Security Council resolutions. We have also supported the Secretary-General in his efforts to seek Iraq's cooperation in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding he signed with the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq in February 1998.

The decision of 31 October came at a moment when the Security Council had just been seriously engaged in discussing the concept of a comprehensive review of Iraq's compliance with Security Council resolutions, as presented by the Secretary-General. Brazil considers that the Secretary-General's possible concept of a comprehensive review constitutes a thoughtful and balanced approach which could allow for progress in the implementation of resolution 687 (1991).

As conceived by the Secretary-General and supported by the Council, the review shall consist of two distinct and equally important phases, the first dedicated to disarmament-related issues and the second encompassing the other requirements arising from relevant resolutions, including those relating to Kuwaiti missing persons and Kuwaiti property.

However, and as the Secretary-General himself stressed, a condition sine qua non for the Council to proceed with the review is the rescission by Iraq of its decision to stop cooperation with UNSCOM and restrict the activities of the IAEA. Complete and unconditional cooperation with the Special Commission and the IAEA is the only way to achieve our goal of addressing fully the disarmament-related requirements of section C of resolution 687 (1991). Only with such cooperation can we envisage the moment in which the disarmament phase would be concluded and the ongoing monitoring and verification phase would be fully in place with the effects stipulated in paragraph 22 of resolution 687 (1991).

Precisely on the day before the Iraqi decision to halt its cooperation with UNSCOM, the members of the Security Council had agreed on a letter, which was sent by the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General, in which the Council offered its initial views on how to hold a comprehensive review. The letter was forward-looking and in our opinion provided a reasonable blueprint for the review. It reflected the consensus of the Council that this comprehensive assessment of Iraq's compliance should be designed so as to lead to the definition of an agreed course of action and timetable which, if followed, would enable the Council to fulfil its intention to act in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 687 (1991) on the duration of the prohibitions referred to in that resolution.

It was thus with a deep sense of dismay that the Brazilian Government learned of the Iraqi decision of 31 October. That decision makes it much more difficult for all of us to proceed in our work with a view to ensuring Iraq's compliance with its obligations, thus making it possible to reintegrate Iraq into the international community. With that objective in mind, we urge Iraq to rescind both its decisions, of 5 August and of 31 October, and to resume full and unconditional cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA.

Finally, from the point of view of my delegation, it is of special importance that operative paragraph 6 of our draft resolution stresses that the Security Council will continue to be seized of this issue, in accordance with its primary responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is our view that this principle should continue to guide our consideration of this matter. Bearing these facts in mind, my delegation decided to join the group of sponsors of this draft resolution.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): The draft resolution before us demands that Iraq rescind immediately and unconditionally the decisions taken to suspend cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and to maintain restrictions on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

We are among those who believe that the situation in Iraq will see notable improvement with the commencement of the comprehensive review and are therefore disappointed at the latest turn of events. We expect the Government of Iraq to fulfil its obligations under all relevant Security Council resolutions and to cooperate fully with the IAEA and UNSCOM on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding of 23 February 1998. It is on the basis of the understanding reached therein that a way forward must be forged to facilitate the conclusion of the outstanding issues and de-escalate the tension caused by recent developments.

We are grateful that our concerns regarding the content of the draft resolution were taken on board, including the demand that Iraq rescind its decisions of 31 October and 5 August this year; the reaffirmation of the Council's readiness to take up the comprehensive review; the intention of the Council, as spelt out in operative paragraph 5, to act in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 687 (1991) on the duration of the prohibitions; full support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and our confidence in his ability to carry this process forward on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding; and our understanding that the present draft resolution contains nothing that could open the door in any eventuality for any kind of action without the clear and precise authority of the Security Council. In that respect, we are happy to note that the Security Council, in operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution,

> "*Decides*, in accordance with its primary responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security, to remain actively seized of the matter."

It is, *inter alia*, on the basis of that understanding that my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

In conclusion, we would once again like to see a resumption of full cooperation between Iraq and the United Nations, and urge Iraq to act quickly and decisively in addressing the current situation.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): After the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Iraq and the United Nations on 23 February 1998, the relationship between the two sides continued to be a good one. Everything seemed to be going smoothly and naturally. That relationship was free of any problem whatsoever; during that period no problems, in the full sense of the word, were created.

Everyone hoped that this situation would continue. However, Iraq's decision of 5 August this year has caused much damage to that relationship. That was followed by the decision of 31 October, which further complicated the situation.

My delegation finds those decisions by Iraq unfortunate. Even as the Security Council was preparing, over the last two months, to undertake a comprehensive review, the latest Iraqi decision put an end to all those strenuous efforts made by the members of the Council.

It is in Iraq's interest to rescind those two decisions and resume its cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We hope that this will be done as soon as possible. My delegation believes that there is still a chance, and it should be seized. The international community should make a greater effort to convince Iraq and to encourage it to rescind its two previous decisions.

Iraq's decision to rescind these two decisions to cease cooperation with UNSCOM and IAEA would pave the way for the comprehensive review which was prepared by the Council and contained in the letter of its President addressed to the Secretary-General on 30 October.

The review consists of two phases: that of destroying weapons of mass destruction and that of freeing Kuwaiti prisoners and restoring Kuwaiti property. We hope that through this review, Iraq will commit itself to meeting its obligation. Then the lifting of the long-lasting embargo could begin, an embargo that has caused the Iraqi people much suffering and much material and moral damage.

In conclusion, my delegation supports the draft resolution that we are about to endorse today, and we hope that it will have positive effects. At the same time, we hope that consultation and dialogue will continue so that a way out of the present crisis can be found. That would enable Iraq to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions and thereby devote itself to the economic and social development that it so sorely needs.

Mr. Niehaus (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On several occasions during its current membership of the Security Council, the delegation of Costa Rica has expressed its firm conviction that the logical and viable solution to the constant crises that have

arisen in the context of the relationship between the United Nations and Iraq lies in the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Time and again, whenever the Iraqi authorities have pushed that relationship to the limit, Costa Rica has stressed that Iraq must comply with the disarmament obligations imposed on it by those resolutions, as an indispensable condition for the lifting of the sanctions imposed.

That unswerving position on the part of my delegation is based on the fact that we have repeatedly noted a persistent course of action on the part of the Government of Iraq to avoid full compliance with those obligations, through excuses and evasions designed to secure new rules of the game that could diminish its responsibilities under those Council resolutions.

The decision taken by the Government of Iraq on 31 October to cease cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission, together with its continued restrictions on the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency, are a further example of that dangerous course of action and give us good reason to doubt the Iraqi authorities' willingness to comply.

This new challenge by Iraq to the authority of the Security Council not only disregards the obligations that it entered into with the international community, but also calls into question the willingness and readiness that it expressed in the Memorandum of Understanding that it signed with the Secretary-General on 23 February this year.

That Memorandum established ample scope for political dialogue, which has now been ignored by Iraq for the sole purpose of securing further concessions in the process of implementing Council resolution 687 (1991). That is why the delegation of Costa Rica cannot accept or consider valid the attempt to justify Iraq's decision on the basis of a failure to understand because of an alleged lack of clarity in the letter that the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General on 30 October.

Costa Rica hopes that Iraq will proceed to comply with its international disarmament obligations, honour its word as given in the Memorandum of Understanding of 23 February and resume cooperation with the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency without conditions.

Costa Rica also hopes that the Government of Iraq will demonstrate clearly and unequivocally to the international community its willingness to resolve the current situation and to take firm steps that will enable the Council promptly to embark on the comprehensive review.

In this connection, I should like to take the opportunity to reaffirm my delegation's support for the valuable and tireless efforts that the Secretary-General has made and is still making and to urge him to continue his work in the hope that dialogue and negotiation will make it possible to achieve a political solution to the current crisis.

For all of those reasons, Costa Rica sponsored and, of course, will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Jagne (Gambia): My delegation would simply like to reiterate that it was flabbergasted by the decision taken by Iraq on 31 October 1998 to cease cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission and to continue imposing restrictions on the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency. This constituted yet another slap in the face, especially at that time, when the Security Council was in the process of fine-tuning a possible concept for a comprehensive review of sanctions imposed on Iraq. The Security Council was working painstakingly in that direction when what had been conveniently described as a "hiccup" suddenly assumed another dimension because of the decision taken on 31 October, so that now it looks like a stranglehold. What this draft resolution is attempting to do is free the international community from that deadly grip and, hopefully, break the vicious cycle of mini-crisis after mini-crisis. We want to move forward.

It was in that spirit that resolution 1194 (1998) was adopted in order to set in motion the process that would culminate in a comprehensive review — provided, of course, that the logical sequence was adhered to. There is no need to emphasize that the first step in this sequence of events is for Iraq to rescind its decision of 5 August. My delegation subscribes wholeheartedly to the view that by failing thus far to comply with its relevant obligations, Iraq is unnecessarily postponing the proposed comprehensive review and, by extension, prolonging the unwarranted suffering of the people of Iraq.

In view of the fact that the draft resolution calmly but firmly provides yet another opportunity for Iraq to

resume cooperation, my delegation will vote in favour of it.

Mr. Dangue Réwaka (Gabon) (*interpretation from French*): In resolution 1154 (1998) of 2 March 1998, which endorsed the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 23 February 1998 in Baghdad by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, the Security Council reaffirmed its intention to comply with the provisions of resolution 687 (1991) concerning the duration of the prohibitions contained in that resolution, provided Iraq placed no more obstacles in the way of the activities of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The assurances that we received from the Iraqi authorities indicated that nothing would be done to impede the process of dismantling the weapons of mass destruction that might still be on Iraqi soil.

However, contrary to every expectation, on 5 August 1998, Iraq decided to suspend and, on 31 October to halt, its cooperation with those two bodies, running the risk of postponement, *sine die*, of the comprehensive review that the Security Council was preparing to conduct.

Whatever the reasons for Iraq's decision, we can only condemn them. Indeed, we believe that that attitude can only increase our suspicions regarding Iraq's goodwill to comply with the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions. That attitude also has the effect of delaying the moment when the Security Council must take a decision under the provisions of paragraphs 21 and 22 of resolution 687 (1991), thereby prolonging the suffering of the Iraqi people.

It is for all these reasons that, once again, we wish to encourage Iraq to resume full cooperation with the Special Commission and the IAEA, because only a resumption of dialogue — and, particularly, the technical dialogue between Iraqi experts and the experts from UNSCOM and the IAEA — will help to provide answers to the Iraqi Government's questions regarding the possibility of a lifting, even a partial lifting, of sanctions by the Security Council.

Therefore we will support the draft resolution before us, since it is in keeping with that idea.

We believe that the unreserved support expressed by members of the Council for the efforts that the Secretary-General has been making to implement the Memorandum of Understanding of 23 February 1998, and their reaffirmation to conform to the relevant provisions of resolution 687 (1991), should inspire greater confidence in Iraq regarding the real desire of Council members to conduct a review of actions undertaken since the imposition of the embargo.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation is deeply disturbed and concerned at the present development in Iraq. We have always believed that Iraq should implement in full Security Council resolutions and resume, as soon as possible, its cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). At the same time the Security Council, in accordance with the provisions of its relevant resolutions, should also make a timely and objective assessment of Iraq's compliance. Only then can Council resolutions be fully and effectively implemented. It is our hope that questions left over from the Gulf war can be properly resolved as soon as possible.

As the Chinese saying goes, "three feet of ice is hardly the result of one day's cold". We should seriously reflect on the root causes of the present situation. There is no doubt that Iraq has to fulfil in a comprehensive manner its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions. But the Council also has the responsibility to make a fair and objective assessment in light of Iraq's compliance.

We are of the view that regarding some weapon files, conditions are ripe to move to the next ongoing monitoring and verification stage. The fact that the Security Council has been unable to make such a political decision is regrettable.

The Secretary-General has proposed that the Council conduct a comprehensive review of the Iraqi question and put forward some concrete ideas in this regard. The Secretary-General's proposals and ideas have been warmly received and supported by an overwhelming majority of the Council members. We appreciate and support the Secretary-General's ideas and positive efforts. We believe that, under the present circumstances, conducting a comprehensive review is still a way out of the present impasse. We support the Secretary-General in his ongoing active role in this regard.

Only through dialogue and consultations and confidence-building can we resolve the present problem. There is no other way out. In this context, I should like

to appeal to all sides to exercise restraint and to try to resolve their differences through dialogue and cooperation and to refrain from any actions that might sharpen the conflict and exacerbate tension.

Although there are still elements in the draft resolution that are not totally to our liking, it is also true that the draft has incorporated amendments put forward by China and other interested countries by taking out the part which determines that the situation in Iraq poses a threat to international peace and security, and by adding that it is the primary responsibility of the Security Council to maintain international peace and security, reiterating its support for the Secretary-General in his efforts to ensure the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and reaffirming the Council's intention to act in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 687 (1991) on the duration of the prohibitions.

We therefore believe that, in general, the text is a balanced one. In order to ensure the full implementation of Security Council resolutions and to seek an appropriate solution to the present problem, we will vote in favour of the draft resolution. We hope that this resolution will facilitate the resumption of cooperation between Iraq, on the one hand, and UNSCOM and IAEA, on the other, so as to allow an early comprehensive review which will in turn free the Iraqi people from sanctions.

The President: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1998/1038.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bahrain, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, France, Gabon, Gambia, Japan, Kenya, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1205 (1998).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): Thank you, Mr. President, for your kind words addressed to me at the beginning of this meeting, and congratulations on your assumption of the presidency.

By its decisions of 5 August and 31 October, Iraq has put itself in flagrant violation of its obligations under the relevant resolutions of the Council. It is right that the Council should react formally and unanimously to this latest attempt to challenge its authority and that of the United Nations as a whole.

This resolution reiterates the Council's full support for the Special Commission and the IAEA. Their work is absolutely vital. Iraq's constant attempts to undermine them and avoid its obligations only delay the moment when the decision can be taken on the lifting of sanctions. Cooperation, not confrontation, is the only way out from sanctions for Iraq.

Certain speakers have given their views on the meaning of this resolution as regards the possible use of force. Let me set out briefly the view of the United Kingdom. It is well established that the authorization to use force given by the Security Council in 1990 may be revived if the Council decides that there has been a sufficiently serious breach of the conditions laid down by the Council for the ceasefire.

In the resolution we have just adopted, the Council has condemned the Iraqi decision to cease all cooperation as a flagrant violation of its obligations.

This resolution sends a clear message to Iraq: resume cooperation now. If Iraq does so, the Council has spelt out unambiguously that it stands ready to conduct a comprehensive review of Iraq's compliance with its obligations under the relevant resolutions and what steps remain to be taken. We hope Iraq will respond positively and resume full cooperation soon.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his kind words addressed to me. I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the United States.

By adopting this resolution, the Security Council has sent a clear and unmistakable message to Iraq: non-compliance will not be rewarded or tolerated. Iraqi efforts to defy Council resolutions and obtain a lifting of sanctions without full compliance have failed, and will fail. Compliance with the Council's resolutions is the only course which will lead Iraq back towards acceptance within the community of nations.

The restrictions which Iraq has imposed on the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) since 5 August are intolerable. Let me be clear: key provisions of resolution 687 (1991) cannot be implemented unless UNSCOM and the IAEA have Iraqi cooperation and full, immediate and unimpeded access.

The Secretary-General, whose efforts to obtain Iraqi compliance are commended in this resolution, has expressed his own view that Iraq's 31 October decision to halt UNSCOM activities is a serious breach and major violation of the 23 February Memorandum of Understanding. It is significant that today's resolution similarly cites the Iraqi decision as a flagrant violation of resolution 687 (1991) and other relevant resolutions. I would also recall that both President Clinton and Secretary of State Albright have emphasized that all options are on the table, and the United States has the authority to act.

The Council has made clear on many occasions — most recently in its 30 October letter to the Secretary-General and today in this resolution — that it is prepared to recognize and respond to Iraqi compliance, but not until Iraq lifts all restrictions on UNSCOM and the IAEA and resumes cooperation.

Iraq should recognize the gravity of the situation it has created. Iraq must turn back from the dangerous and self-defeating course it has chosen. The United States sincerely hopes that Iraq will heed the clear message of this resolution and take the necessary steps without delay

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.